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The situation in the Middle East

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains replies received from Member States in response to the Secretary-General's note verbale of 28 April 2008 concerning the implementation of the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions 62/84, entitled "Jerusalem", and 62/85, entitled "The Syrian Golan".

* A/63/150 and Corr.1.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 62/84 and 62/85. In its resolution 62/84, the Assembly welcomed the decision of those States that had established diplomatic missions in Jerusalem to withdraw their missions from the city, in compliance with Security Council resolution 478 (1980). In its resolution 62/85, which deals with Israeli policies in the Syrian territory occupied by Israel since 1967, the Assembly demanded once more that Israel withdraw from all the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967 in implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

2. In order to fulfil my reporting responsibility under resolutions 62/84 and 62/85, on 28 April 2008 I addressed notes verbales to the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations and to the Permanent Representatives of other Member States requesting them to inform me of any steps their Governments had taken or envisaged taking concerning implementation of the relevant provisions of those resolutions. As at 31 August 2008, replies had been received from Colombia, Ecuador and Mexico. Those replies are reproduced in section II of the present report.

II. Replies received from Member States

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]

1. The Permanent Mission of Colombia presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to refer to the request contained in notes DPA/APD/GA/RES.62/102-105 and DPA/APD/GA/RES.62/84-85 of 28 April 2008.

2. In that connection, Colombia wishes to reaffirm its position of recognizing the right of Israel to secure and internationally recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force, as well as its support for the Palestinian aspiration to establish in the region an independent State whose citizens are able to enjoy full human, social, economic and cultural rights and exercise the right to self-determination of peoples.

3. Colombia thus shares the view that the two States should live side by side in harmony and peaceful coexistence, as proposed under the Quartet's road map, the international policy instrument most conducive to the achievement of peace in the region, which has Colombia's full endorsement and support.

4. Colombia voted in favour of General Assembly resolutions 62/102, "Assistance to Palestine Refugees", 62/103, "Persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities", 62/104, "Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East", and 62/105, "Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues".

5. In accordance with the relevant paragraphs, Colombia has made timely contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, whose purpose is to mitigate the continued deterioration of the socio-economic and humanitarian situation in the region.

6. Furthermore, Colombia voted in favour of resolution 62/84, "Jerusalem". Colombia reaffirms its special interest in places of religious significance in view of its Christian tradition and recognizes the special status of Jerusalem. In that regard, Colombia has maintained its diplomatic representation with Israel in Tel Aviv since 1958, in accordance with the relevant provision of that resolution.

7. Colombia also voted in favour of resolution 62/85, "The Syrian Golan", thereby demonstrating its unchanging position of urging Israel to resume talks with both Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic with a view to fulfilling the commitments made in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]

1. The Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations and, with regard to note No. DPA/APD/GA/RES.62/84-85, has the honour to state the following.

2. Ecuador proclaims its commitment to peace and reaffirms its respect for international law as constituting the standard of conduct for States in their relations with one another and in resolving disputes. It reaffirms that the resolution of conflicts must take into account all the legitimate interests of the parties, in particular the protection of the human rights of any civilians involved.

3. Ecuador recognizes the right of both Palestine and Israel to a free and sovereign State, existing side by side with safe and internationally recognized borders, and calls on the parties to fulfil the commitments that they have freely undertaken, which are indispensable to the achievement of lasting peace and stability in the Middle East.

4. Ecuador condemns the use of violence and the perpetration of terrorist acts, in violation of international law and international humanitarian law.

5. Ecuador considers that only an environment conducive to negotiation and the peaceful resolution of the impasse will be able to contribute to the protection of the civilians in the occupied territories, whose fundamental rights must be preserved.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]

1. The Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat and has the honour to refer to its communications DPA/APD/GA/RES.62/84-85 and DPA/APD/GA/RES.62/102-105 of 28 April 2008, relating to the implementation of the resolutions on the situation in the Middle East and on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, adopted during the sixty-second session of the General Assembly. In that connection, the Permanent Mission of Mexico has also submitted an annex providing information relating to our country's compliance with resolutions 62/84, 62/85, 62/102, 62/103, 62/104 and 62/105.

Resolution 62/84, on Jerusalem

2. It is up to the countries involved in the conflict to comply with the provisions of resolution 62/84. Nevertheless, pursuant to paragraph 2, it should be stated that Mexico does not have and never had a diplomatic representation in the city of Jerusalem. However, in connection with paragraph 3 of the resolution, Mexico reiterates its support for a solution which recognizes that the State of Israel and a politically and economically viable Palestinian State have the right to exist, living in harmony within secure and internationally recognized borders.

Resolution 62/85, on the Syrian Golan

3. In accordance with paragraph 7, Mexico supports a comprehensive multilateral review of the conflict that encompasses all the conflicts in the Middle East. It also supports the presence of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, which it considers fundamental for maintaining stability in the region.

4. Mexico believes that the only viable solution to the conflicts lies in dialogue and negotiation between the parties involved, in conformity with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.